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HOW TO FACE CURRENT
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ALBERTINA LIMA OLIVEIRA
(COORD.)

SUICIDE AFTER 65 YEARS OLD: CURRENT DATA IN PORTUGAL

Sónia Quintão⁴⁸, Susana Costa, Sandra Alves, Ricardo Gusmão

Abstract

Suicide and self-injury among the elderly are a serious public health problem. There is evidence that diseases and mental disorders are strongly associated with suicide in older people. For example, using psychological autopsy, between 71% and 95% of older people who committed suicide had a diagnosis of a mental disorder at the time of their death. Recent studies show there is a strong relationship between suicidal attempts and carrying out the fatal act in the elderly, which results from the interaction of complex factors: physical, mental, neurobiological and social. In Portugal, and other countries, the highest suicide rates are found among the elderly and especially in men. Suicide methods used in this age group are specific, as they are more lethal and are often used in combination to increase the odds of a fatal outcome. We present the trends in rates of suicide in Portugal, in the period 1980 to 2009, by gender and method used, in the age group older than 64 years comparing it to the population under 65.

Keywords: Suicide Trends; Elderly; Gender differences.

⁴⁸ Departamento de Saúde Mental, Faculdade de Ciências Médicas
Universidade Nova de Lisboa – CEDOC
Email: sonia.quintao@fcm.unl.pt